

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 02728 01 OF 02 031828Z
ACTION NODS-00

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O P 031710Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEIDATE 6892
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
WHITE HOUSE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 2728

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: PRESENTATION OF ANGLO-AMERICAN VIEWS TO GARBA

REF: STATE 053342

1. MY BRITISH COLLEAGUE (SIR SAM FALLE) AND I PRESENTED REFTEL'S TALKING POINTS THIS MORNING TO MEA COMMISSIONER GARBA. FALLE TOOK THE LEAD IN THE INITIAL PRESENTATION, READING THE TEXT OF THE TALKING POINTS SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY. I SUPPLEMENTED HIS PRESENTATION WITH A REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF OUR ATTEMPTS TO ENGAGE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) IN MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS AND STRESSING THE DIFFICULTIES WE NOW ENCOUNTER IN THE FACE OF
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PF'S APPARENT UNWILLINGNESS TO AGREE TO THE MINIMUM ESSENTIALS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN.

2. GARBA LISTENED ATTENTIVELY WITHOUT COMMENT. WHEN WE HAD FINISHED, HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WAS COMPELLED TO IMPRESS UPON US HOW DISAPPOINTED NIGERIA WAS WITH THE PRESENT TURN OF EVENTS. HE REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF NIGERIA'S SUPPORT FOR THE A-A PROPOSAL.

HIGHLIGHTING HIS OWN REPEATED EFFORTS TO EXPLAIN NIGERIA'S SUPPORT TO AN INCREASINGLY CRITICAL DOMESTIC AUDIENCE. HOW CAN NIGERIA MAINTAIN THIS STAND, HE DEMANDED, WHEN IT WAS APPARENT THAT THE A-A PORPOSAL NO LONGER ENJOYED THE COMMITMENT OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT? HE CITED THE POSITION TAKEN BY CONSERVATIVE SHADOW-CABINET FOREIGN MINISTER JOHN DAVIS, SAYING HE KNEW THAT DAVIS, IN FACT, REPRESENTED LABOR GOVERNMENT VIEWS AS WELL. IN RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR THIS ADVICE ON HOW TO PROCEED, HE PLEADED THAT 'CONSIDENTENCY' WAS THE PREREQUISITE OF ANY CONTINUING CREDIBILITY OF THE A-A INITIATIVE IN AFRICAN EYES. HE REFERRED IN BITTER TERMS TO DAVID OWEN'S PLEDGE DURING THEIR HEATHROW MEETING LAST NOVEMBER THAT THE UK WOULD CONDEMN AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. OWEN'S PLEDGE HAD NOT BEEN KEPT. AS FOR THE US, THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD 'THROWN ASIDE' ANY YOUNG AFTER YOUNG HAD STATED THAT THE INTERNAL TALKS THREATENED TO PRODUCE CIVIL WAR. HOW COULD THESE TALKS POSSIBLY REPRESENT 'A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD,' AS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WHEN IN FACT THEY WOULD ONLY LEAD TO INCREASE VIOLENCE AND CHAOS? NIGERIA HAD PUSHED HARD ON THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO BE FLEXIBLE AT MALTA, BUT GIVEN PRESENT CIRUCMSTANCES THE FMT HAD NOW LOST ITS INFLUENCE ON THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, WHICH VIEWED NIGERIA AS TAINTED BY ITS SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH. THE CRUX OF THE MATTER REMAINS THE REMOVAL OF SMITH, BUT IT IS NOW OBVIOUS THAT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CMMITMENT TO THAT REMOVAL AMOUNTED TO LITTLE MORE THAN EMPTY LIP-SERVICE. HE MUST WARN US OF HIS DEEP PERSONAL WORRY REGARDING THE IMPLICATIONS OF ANGLO-AMERICAN REFUSAL

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TO CONDEMN THE INTERNAL TLAKS. HE SAID HE TALKED SO FRANKLY TO US ONLY BECAUSE HE KNEW WE WERE PERSONALLY COMMITTED TO AFRICA. IF HE DID NOT SEE US IN THIS LIGHT, HE WOULD NOT HAVE AGREED TO MEET WITH US THIS MORNING.

3. IN REPLY, FALLE AND I STRESSED AGAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF A MORE FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. GARBA ASKED FOR A COPY OF THE PF'S STATEMENT OF FEBRUARY 25. I SAID I WOULD GET IT TO HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (MAPUTO PLEASE SEE LAGOS 2534 REQUESTING THE TEXT). WE CITED THE DIFFICULTY THAT WOULD CONFRONT ALL OF US INCIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THERE WAS AN AGREEMENT IN SALISBURY (GARBA HAD NOT HEARD THIS MORNING'S RADIO BROADCAST ON THIS MATTER, SO WE FILLED HIM IN) AND THE PF CONTINUED TO BE RECALCITRANT. I READ GARBA THE EXACT WORDING OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S 'SIGNIFICANT STEP' STATEMENT.

4. GARBA WAS UNWILLING TO ACCEPT OUR PREMISE THAT THE PF HAD BEEN INSUFFICIENTLY FORTHCOMING AT MALTA. WE EXPLAINED THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE A-A PROPOSAL AND THE PF ATTITUDE ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS THE POWER OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, CONTROL OF THE POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES, AND COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNING

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----106819 031916Z /40

O P 031710Z MAR 78
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 2728

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

COUNCIL. GARBA SAID NIGERIA HAD NEVER INSISTED ON AN EXCLUSIVE
PF ROLE IN ZIMBABWE BUT FEARED WE HAD ABANDONED OUR ACTIVE PURSUIT
OF THE A-A PLAN TOO EARLY. WHY, HE ASKED, HAD WE NOT MET AGAIN
WITH THE PF AFTER THE MALTA TALKS? WE REPLIED THAT THE A-A PLAN
REMAINED A STANDARD AGAINST WHICH ANY SALIBSURY ARRANGEMENTS
SHOULD BE MEASURED. WE SAID WE MAINTAINED OUR INTEREST IN DIS-
CUSSING THE PLAN WITH THE PF BUT COULD NOT PURUSE THEM HITHER
AND YOU OR ACCEPT A MEETING WITH THEM UNLESS IT WAS PATENTLY CLEAR
THEY WERE IN FACT INTERESTED IN SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS. GARBA
DID NOT SEEM TO ACCEPT OUR ARGUMENTS CONCERNING THE DIFFICULTIES
OF NEGOTIATING WITH THE PF. ON THE OTHER HAND, NEITHER DID HE HAVE
SUFFICIENT AWARENESS OF THE DETAILS OF THOSE DISCUSSIONS
TO ARGUE TO THE CONTRARY.

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5. GARBA SAID A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING APPEARED TO HIM TO BE THE ONLY WAY TO PROCEED. FALLE AND I EXPLAINED US/UK REASON FOR RELUCTANCE CONCERNING SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION. HOWEVER, IF AND WHEN SUCH A DEBATE WERE HELD, ALL PARTIES SHOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO STATE THEIR CASE. FALLE SAID DAVID OWEN WOULD VERY MUCH WISH TO PARTICPATE. GARBA SAID 'YOU CAN'T INVITE SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA' HE WOULD NOT COMMIT HIMSELF WHEN I ASKED WHETHER NIGERIA WOULD ACCEPT PRESENTATIONS FROM ALL FOUR LEADING NATIONALISTS. HE MERELY SUGGESTED THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL DECIDE WHO WOULD BE INVITED.

6. GARBA EVADED OUR PROBING OF HIS PERSONAL PLANS. HE LAUGHED WHEN I INDICATED WE HAD RECEIVED INDICATION FROM NEW YORK THAT HE WOULD ATTEND A SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE NEXT WEK. HE DID NOT, IN FACT, APPEAR TO KNOW THAT THE AFRICAN GROUP HAD ISSUED A FORMAL CALL FOR SUCH A MEETING. GARBA WAS INTERESTED TO LEARN OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION BY THE AFRICAN GROUP. WE READ HIM THE TEXT. FALLE SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARING A FULLER ALTERNATIVE DRAFT. (GARBA'S STAFF HAVE TOLD US THAT NIGER PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE ARRIVES IN LAGOS MONDAY, MARCH 6 FOR A FIVE-DAY STATE VISIT; THEY KNOW OF NO PLANS FOR A TRIL BY GARBA TO-GO TO NEW YORK.)

7. GARBA ASKED FOR AN AIDE-MEMOIRE ON OUR ORAL PRESENTATION. HIS STAFF TOOK EXTENSIVE (AND FRANTIC) NOTES. PAST EXPERINECE INDICATES SUCH NOTES ARE OFTEN THE SOURCE OF SERIOUS INACCURACIES AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS DIFFICULT SUBSEQUENTLY TO RECTIFY. WHILE RECOGNIZING I WAS ALREADY TURNED DOWN (STATE 53476), FALLE AND I REITERATE A REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO DELIVER TALKING POINTS IN WRITTEN FORM.
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